

DELTA GREEN

// The Labyrinth //

ARC DREAM PUBLISHING PRESENTS *DELTA GREEN: THE LABYRINTH*

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Foreword

I'VE HEARD SOME PEOPLE MAKE THE CASE THAT we're in the Golden Age of Roleplaying Games. Now that you're holding in your hands a new *Delta Green* book written by John Scott Tynes, that case is closed. We're there. But let's not get ahead of ourselves. Why is this book so important?

Delta Green was a landmark RPG release of the 1990s. Fusing H.P. Lovecraft's mythos with modern-day action and intrigue, it transformed that mythos into an imminent menace that felt perfectly at home in that decade. The Cold War was over and tension between the world's powers was a thing of the past. The Internet promised to unite us all in an enlightened, information-rich environment where prosperity could reach each and every one of us. The utopia we'd dreamed of was finally within our grasp. *Delta Green* showed us how cosmic terrors could lurk in that modern world's nooks and crannies, reaching out from its hiding places to taint and destroy everything we looked forward to. In a time of hope and optimism, *Delta Green* provided a delightful escape to a cynical, twisted world where going out fighting was a luxury.

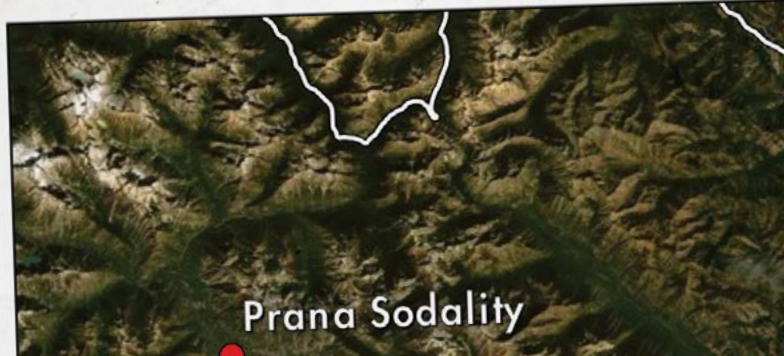
And then, well, everything that happened between THEN and NOW happened. Say what you will about global thermonuclear warfare, but at least the end it promised was mercifully swift, and was served up without a legion of braying jackasses polluting every possible channel of human communication. I've seen *The Day After*, *Testament*, and *Threads*. I did not think we'd hurtle to our doom along this particular trajectory. We live in a world of inverted tyranny, where the worst among us have their say, their way, and their day. The shit didn't just hit the fan. It passed through the blades, aerosolized, and reached every corner of modern civilization.

And once more, against that backdrop, Tynes comes along with a mind-cracking slab of horror that is the perfect antidote to the bullshit of our times. Once a doomed blaze of glory was the perfect escapist entertainment in a world hurtling toward a bright future. *Delta Green* gave us a vision of just how bad things could be. Today, it must compete with exactly how bad they've gotten.

Well, let me tell you, the times might be a-changin' but *Delta Green* keeps the hits coming, even in the 21st century.

Within this book, you'll find something far worse than Cthulhu or Azathoth. You'll find all the dumb, grating, miserable ills that everyone agrees need to go but that are too entrenched, too useful to the right people, for anyone to do anything about them. Internet trolls? The rich and powerful with an appetite for resources that would give Grendel indigestion? A religious sect made for incels? It's all in here, and in true *Delta Green* style, Tynes gives you the chance to go down in a blaze of (covert, heavily tamped down and conveniently explained after the fact to keep the public wrapped in merciful ignorance) glory. Our escape today is not to a world filled with horrors we can't imagine. Instead, *The Labyrinth* lets us step into our own, horrible world—but with the dismal plagues we suffer neatly prepared for demolition. It won't be pretty (what *Delta Green* op ever is?), it won't be easy (see the last parenthetical), and it won't be the kind of mission you come back from in one piece, if you come back at all (seeing a trend?). This book is your chance to do something that we, collectively, have lost touch with: the ability to look the world's ills in the eye and send them packing.

I'd be selling this book short if I ended this foreword there, but we're just getting started. The genius of *The Labyrinth* is in its handling of both sides of the horror equation. If the past 20 years have taught us anything, it's that things we think are unmitigated benefits (like maybe a global network of interconnected computers) can turn out to have a dark side. Tynes gives us enemies to struggle against, but perhaps even worse, he gives us allies who can help us. For a time.



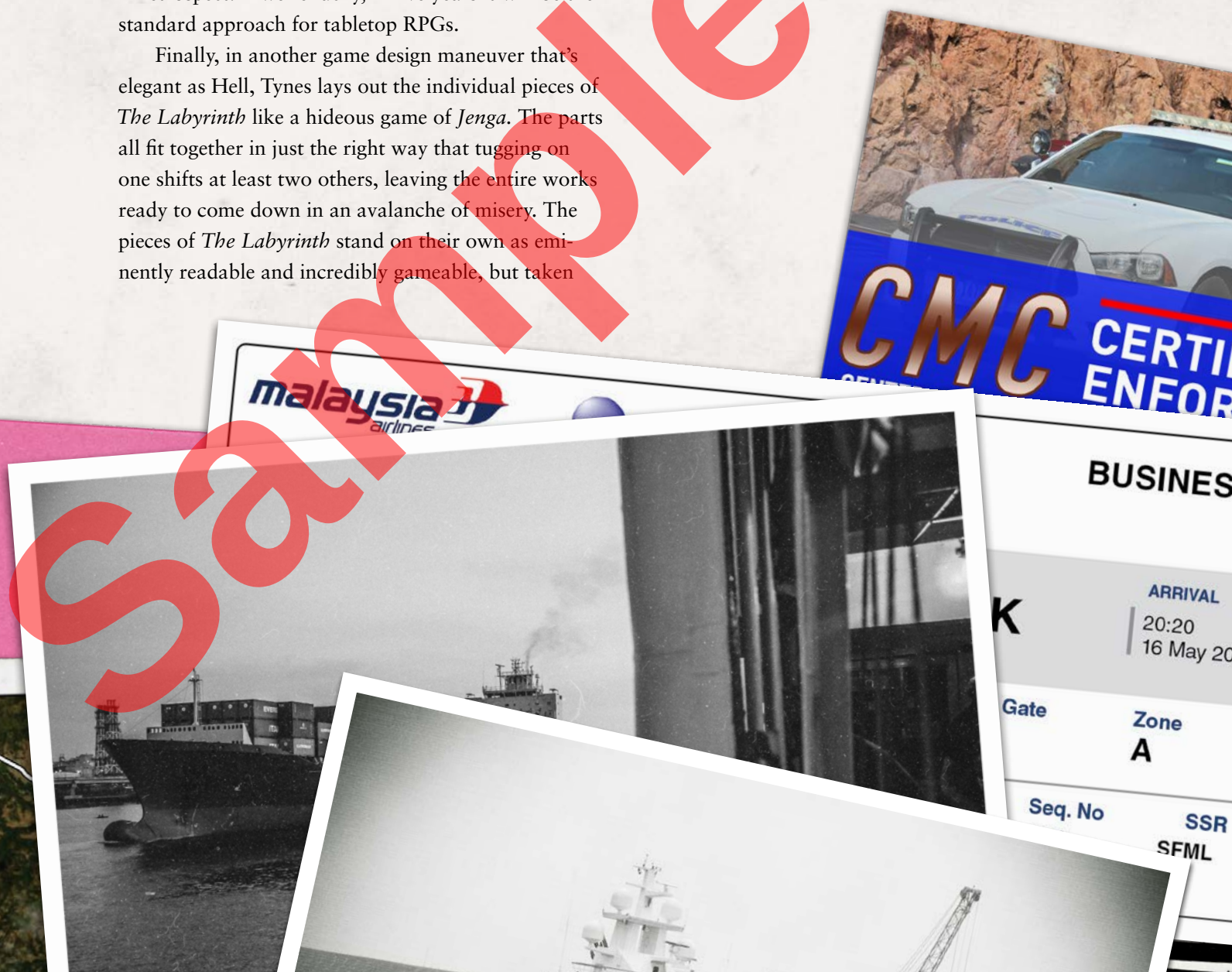
It's fitting that *The Labyrinth* creates a web of useful contacts for Delta Green operatives, all of whom harbor their own secrets—and, in time, after providing much needed aid, turn against their one-time allies. I can't think of a better way to capture how our understanding of the world has shifted since the late 1990s. Once we could divide the world: First World, Second World, Third World. Now, we're all one blob of humanity trapped on this planet, and as Walt Kelly once wrote, "We have met the enemy and he is us." In a world where 911 calls are weaponized, where too many people fear the police that walk their streets, could we see those who would crusade against evil as anything other than our next enemies? Tynes' approach to groups like the Center for Missing Children or The Witness Alliance is one of those RPG landmarks that is so brilliant it seems obvious in retrospect. If we're lucky, in five years it will be the standard approach for tabletop RPGs.

Finally, in another game design maneuver that's elegant as Hell, Tynes lays out the individual pieces of *The Labyrinth* like a hideous game of *Jenga*. The parts all fit together in just the right way that tugging on one shifts at least two others, leaving the entire works ready to come down in an avalanche of misery. The pieces of *The Labyrinth* stand on their own as eminently readable and incredibly gameable, but taken

together they weave a pattern that lights your mind on fire. I have roughly 10,000 things on my to-do list, but "Run a *Delta Green* campaign" just forced its way on there and shot up to number one.

So, here we stand in the dismal years of late-stage capitalism, an era that has somehow produced a groundswell of RPGs. We have the benefit of knowing we're in a Golden Age while it's happening. We have a new *Delta Green* book from John Scott Tynes, and it lives up to every proper noun in the preceding sentence clause. The world might be on the verge of its last, shuddering gasps, but I'll say this for our little hobby. If this be our end, it's a pretty damn glorious one.

Mike Mearls
Seattle, September 2019



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Yes No
CT scan
Physical Therapy
Worst Pain Ever
Stabbing, Numbness, Tingling, Pulling, Cramping, Tightness
and goes, Getting worse, Getting better, Staying about the same

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The Witness Alliance

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// Introduction //

“She will not hesitate to smash the milk bottle on the edge of the marble kitchen counter and shove the jagged edges into an Agent’s throat.”



Introduction

WELCOME TO *THE LABYRINTH*.

Every Delta Green campaign needs allies and opponents. My goal for this book is to give you, the Handler, not just a set of factions to toss into your campaign as one-shots but to provide a new set of lenses through which to view the world of Delta Green and to expand the scope and depth of your campaign.

This book contains four potential allies and four clear enemies. Each chapter covers the basics of a group's history, organization, leadership, field operatives, agenda, important individuals, and a three-stage story arc that shows how the group evolves and escalates in response to the Agents' investigations. Finally, each group is given optional connections to other groups, so that you can enter this book from any chapter and still wind up someplace else. It is, after all, *The Labyrinth*.

Nothing in this book is static. All of these groups change the more you use them. And those changes give you new storylines, new characters, and new mysteries for the Agents to pursue.

Potential Allies

The potentially allied organizations have an immediate practical use in your campaign as clue dispensers. Introduce an appropriate group during an operation and then have them provide useful assistance to the Agents. Ideally, your players will soon voluntarily reach out to the group for further help—and that's when you've got them snared. Because each allied group evolves as the Agents rely on it more and more. And just as Agents lose Sanity and Bonds due to exposure to the unnatural, these groups lose their own resources and mission clarity due to exposure to the Agents.

Which Delta Green?

When this book refers to Delta Green in terms of whom the Agents work for, it's meant to be either the Outlaws or the Program depending on your campaign. Whichever you're using is Delta Green as far as this book is concerned. In the few places where it really matters, the book is specific about the Outlaws and the Program.

Center for the Missing Child

This nonprofit is dedicated to the cause of missing, exploited, and murdered children. Their practical focus is on educational outreach to law enforcement at every level, teaching them best practices and delivering research studies on their cause. In some cases, CMC volunteers serve as adjunct investigators in active cases. They collate information, search for related cases in the CMC database, and assist families of affected children with resources and emotional support. One CMC volunteer, Joe Dawant, has an unresolved history with the Atlanta Child Murders case. His obsession spirals unchecked the more he interacts with Delta Green.

Dream Syndicate

This online group of people are united in a strange experience: they have identical dreams of unnatural events. As a group they catalog their dreams, look for real-world connections, and try to identify details in their dreams that could reveal more about their experiences. This well-meaning group may have helpful dreams related to the Agents' investigations. However, one of the group's leaders is secretly a fraudulent stalker who is sexually obsessed with the founder of the group. He will lie to win the Agents' favor in an attempt to impress her, and is surveilling her constantly. When his deceptions come to light, he takes drastic action.

Agent Renko

This Russian operative of GRU SV-8 is watching the Agents for his masters, looking for opportunities to steal information or artifacts and learn more about Delta Green. But when he gets in trouble, the Agents are the only ones he can ask for help. Over time he becomes a sort of double agent, befriending the Agents but still surveilling them and reporting on their activities. He can provide useful information yet is never entirely trustworthy—and he may be lying about everything. Eventually he wants to betray the GRU and defect to the arms of Delta Green. But is even that a lie?

The Witness Alliance

This nonprofit catalogs, monitors, and publicizes hate groups so their activities do not go unnoticed. They educate law enforcement on hate-group activities and work with academics who study such groups to gather and spread information. They have strong relationships with the mainstream media and with law enforcement at all levels. Unfortunately, one of their relationships is with an academic at Miskatonic University who is a retired Delta Green agent. This man is in a precarious mental state caused by a lifetime of fighting the unnatural, and in particular due to his experiences during the collapse of the Cult of Transcendence. A researcher at the Witness Alliance is in

love with him. As he falls apart, she seeks revenge on Delta Green for what he has suffered.

Antagonists

No opponent in this book is a traditional Cthuloid cult. Instead, each opponent is a group of humans doing human-scale things, but the depths of their obsessions have led them to unnatural paths. Each has their own viewpoint on humanity and our world. They offer you the opportunity to present and portray antagonist characters who are both way off the deep end but also still capable of going on cable news to explain their activities. In general, they aren't even terribly dangerous—at first. But as Agents investigate them they climb to greater heights of power, threat, and initiative.

New Life Fertility

This private company provides very expensive but completely infallible fertility services to the global elite in the realms of politics, finance, nobility, and celebrity. While their approach is rooted in the science of in-vitro fertilization, they get a helping hand from the a substance called Lac Maternum—the milk of Shub-Niggurath. More than 15,000 babies have been

OPINT: Cracked Agents

There's a narrative convention of ghost stories and supernatural horror movies in which the semi-crazy member of the ensemble is the one who first sees the ghost, or has mysterious visions, or otherwise is shown to be mentally susceptible to metaphysical incursions related to the events of the story. (The character of Eleanor in Shirley Jackson's novel *The Haunting of Hill House* is one of many examples.)

In this book, the concept is expressed as the Agent being Cracked. Any Agent whose **current SAN** is below their original **POW×4**—the same as their original Breaking Point—is considered Cracked. (For more on the Breaking Point see **DERIVED ATTRIBUTES** on page 18 in the *Agent's Handbook*). Agents who dropped below **POW×4 SAN** and then recovered are not considered Cracked.

Players do not need to know about this mechanic. They shouldn't write it on their character sheet. It does not confer any proactive benefit they can make use of. But at certain points in their investigations into *The Labyrinth*, their Cracked status serves as a guide for the Handler in choosing who perceives things no one else sees.

If you have multiple Cracked Agents in your campaign, choose the one whose SAN is lowest. Or just choose any Cracked Agent and cycle through them as phenomena manifest so it's not always the same one. (Why are they called Cracked? Because it's the cracked ones who let the light into the world.)

born through this method and the first of them have reached adulthood. As they mature, they are only attracted to others of their kind. The babies they make together are no longer human. Within a decade, there will be more than 10,000 of these inhuman second-generation offspring ascending to inherit the wealth, political power, and social status of their families. And if their human families get in the way, they murder them.

The Lonely

There are lonely people and then there are the Lonely: the unnaturally alone who are haunted by a mysterious book each possesses. Every one interacts online with a mysterious person known as CptnSnshn (“Captain Sunshine”) who reinforces their fundamental loneliness and, when needed, pushes them towards the deeper levels of misery. Some Lonely become the Grim, stalkers and bullies who act both online and in real life. And some Grim become the Furious—and for a day or two, we all know their names and how many people they murdered in a sudden spasm of inexplicable violence. Behind them all is the inscrutable agenda of CptnSnshn, an avatar of the King in Yellow.

The Sowers

In dying towns across the Rust Belt, this devout Christian sect is building self-reliant communities of strong men and their weakening wives whose willpower is used to power daily rituals to Jesus. Led by a charismatic founder who disdains evangelism, the sect stays under the radar to grow their crops, cross-train their skills, visit the shooting range, and help fellow members in need. If you become a Deacon, you can do anything you want—as long as you are willing to cut the throat of an eternal angel named Azazel, who grants you existential innocence from all crimes. When push comes to shove with Delta Green, they hire a law firm to sue the government and a PR firm to get them on cable talk shows.

The Prana Sodality

This New Age nonprofit works from a remote compound in Washington state. It has developed an energy

healing technology in an old ICBM silo to help people get healthy. Unfortunately, the entire area is infested with Lloigor, and the group’s technology is opening a direct channel to those vast and alien intellects. This chapter acts as its own mini-sourcebook for the very troubled town of Stanton, home of the country’s first production plutonium reactor and a nexus for violence, sickness, and misery for hundreds of years. Stanton is haunted by ghosts, weakened by genetic and environmental diseases, and wracked by frequent spasms of grotesque violence. The day Agents arrive, they walk right into a mass shooting—and things only get worse from there.

Mapping Your Labyrinth

Your Agents will not have a map to this labyrinth of allies and enemies, but you will. The minotaur, after all, knows every twist and turn of the maze where it lives. And make no mistake: you are the monster at the heart of this labyrinth, the organizing entity who has assembled a devilish set of traps, dead ends, and misdirections to lead the Agents deeper and deeper. As their Sanity fades and their Bonds wither, the Agents are unlikely to emerge from your labyrinth alive or intact. And when each finally succumbs to their destiny, you will have achieved yours. Not because you killed the Agents or drove them insane, but because you gave them the fire in which they burned so heroically. No one wins in Delta Green—but the struggle to try delivers the drama, the excitement, and the horror that we crave.

Your personal map of the labyrinth will be very much your own creation. Mine is on pages 12–13: connections I’ve provided between every group in this book.

What’s missing? Your campaign’s operations. You likely have one or more published or invented operations in mind for your Agents to attempt. To construct your own map, begin with the next operation you intend to use. Then consider each of the four potential allies in this book. Which one might be relevant to that operation? Pick one, review it, and decide how you’re going to introduce them in play. Which